

Contracting Community Highlights



In the “Contracting Community Highlights” section of *Army AL&T* Magazine, we are afforded the opportunity to educate the acquisition community on the missions and achievements of our various Army contracting organizations. Each feature article provides in-depth information relative to a contracting organization, mission or process, while our “News from the Field” segments offer brief glimpses into contracting-related successes and achievements at numerous sites.

This issue’s feature article highlights a primary mission of the National Training Center (NTC) Acquisition Command at Fort Irwin, CA, — to train contingency contracting officers (CCOs) who support warfighting brigades. The authors present the 3-phase training process that CCOs will go through and the issues that the CCOs can anticipate while deployed. The article also details the support and training that the NTC Acquisition Command provides to the CCOs during their deployment to NTC.

In addition to the feature article and the regular Defense Acquisition Regulation Council Corner, we are proud to pass on news and laudatory comments for outstanding achievements by command personnel from our contracting organizations. We have also included a synopsis of the CP-14 FY04 Intern and Training Coordinator Workshop that was conducted in Nashville, TN, in June 2004.

We appreciate the support from the field in providing the material to submit for publication, and we hope you find the submissions as informative and interesting as we do. Enjoy reading the November-December 2004 issue, and have a safe holiday season!

Ms. Tina Ballard

Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army
(Policy & Procurement)

Contingency Contracting at the National Training Center Supports Unit Rotations

LTC Anthony J. Nicolella and SFC Walter Epps

The National Training Center (NTC), Fort Irwin, CA, is responsible for training the U.S. Army’s warfighting brigades. Every mechanized and armored rotational brigade (Active and many National Guard) comes to NTC once a year for training. Normally, there are at least 9 rotations per year at NTC, but the number can be as high as 12 rotations. Training these brigades usually includes maneuver and gunnery scenarios lasting approximately 4 weeks. Scenarios can vary from high-intensity conflicts (large tank formations going toe-to-toe) to low-intensity conflicts (small-scale units conducting raids, ambushes, etc.). Regardless of the scenario, the one constant factor is that these maneuver brigades will need contracting support and they will get this support from contingency contracting officers (CCOs) and the NTC Acquisition Command (AC).

A principal NTC AC mission, part of the Army Contracting Agency–Southern Region, is to provide an on-the-job training environment for CCOs, while also assisting the CCOs in providing contracting support to the warfighting brigades. CCOs are military contracting professionals



(normally the rank of staff sergeant through major) whose primary responsibility is providing contracting support to warfighting brigades. NTC trains the CCOs in three phases — pre-deployment, deployment and post-deployment.

Pre-Deployment Phase

This requires CCOs to contact the NTC AC’s CCO Program Manager (PM). The CCO PM then forwards the CCOs advance packets, which are also available on the

NTC AC's home page <http://www.irwin.army.mil/ac/cco>.

It is highly recommended that CCOs go to this page to download their advance packets, which include the NTC CCO Regulation, lessons learned, CCO support kit and local policy letters. Once the CCOs have their advance packets, they should familiarize themselves with its contents. The advance packet materials will help CCOs execute their duties. Besides familiarizing themselves with the advance packet material during this pre-deployment phase, CCOs will also need to:

- Arrange transportation and lodging for the brigade's torch party and main body.
- Obtain unit requirements at least 30 days prior to deployment start.
- Coordinate catered meals with the U.S. Forces Command G-4. Normally, catered meals are authorized for the first and last day at NTC and only at two locations: Southern California Logistics Airfield and the Yermo Railhead.
- Complete and forward network-access requests to the NTC AC's System Administrator. This will allow the command to set up CCO e-mail and Standard Procurement System (SPS) accounts.
- Coordinate funding via Military Interdepartment Purchase Request to NTC's Director of Resource Management (DRM) for *indirect costs* such as operation and administrative costs. This process must be completed at least 60 days before deployment. *Direct costs* such as operation of equipment and transportation should be completed at least 30 days before deployment.

Deployment Phase

Once the above tasks are completed, CCOs are ready to enter the deployment phase. This is the most challenging and rewarding training phase because it requires CCOs to perform their main mission (provide contracting support) under the same stressful conditions that they will experience during a real-world deployment. CCOs perform the full gamut of contracting (cradle-to-grave) at a very fast, and sometimes grueling, pace during unit deployments. At a minimum, CCOs will perform the following tasks:

- Receive unit requirements.
- Identify sources.
- Solicit quotes/offers.
- Evaluate quotes/offers.
- Award contracts using SPS. The types of contracts awarded are very diverse and can range from portable latrines to portable showers to various rental vehicles.
- Oversee issue/turn-in of leased equipment.
- Process claims.
- Document contractor quality, service and delivery.
- Review contractor invoices.
- Ensure that *Material Inspection and Receiving Reports (DD250s)* are completed and distributed and that the contractor is paid in a timely manner.

Post-Deployment Phase

The final phase is the post-deployment phase, better known as the out-processing phase. This phase is also very challenging because it takes place as the unit is turning in its equipment and preparing to either deploy back to its home station or, in many cases, deploy directly to an overseas theater of operation. Unit personnel have a tendency to be in a hurry to leave and this can make the CCO's job more difficult. Therefore, it's extremely important that CCOs maintain good communications with contracting officer representatives along with the unit S-4s, comptrollers and the NTC DRM. Any sloppiness during this phase has the potential to cost the government thousands of dollars in claims. During the post-deployment phase, CCOs will:

- Write and turn in their after action reviews.
- Be evaluated on performance by the NTC Acquisition Commander and CCO PM. The CCO's Director of Contracting (DOC) or unit commander receives a copy of each CCO's evaluation. Many DOCs and commanders use this information in the CCO's Officer Evaluation Report or Noncommissioned Officer Evaluation Report.
- Clear the NTC AC (i.e., return building/office key, close-out e-mail and SPS accounts, etc). Before departing,



CCOs CPTs Nicole Pasion (Fort Lewis, WA) and Angelito Clark (Fort Hood, TX) work together to award a contract in support of 3rd Brigade, 1st Armored Division's Rotation 03-04 at NTC. (U.S. Army photo.)

CCOs must close out all contracts and settle all claims.

- Debrief the NTC Acquisition Commander, CCO PM and contracting officer.
- Provide the NTC AC with a forwarding mailing address, telephone number and e-mail address in the event there is a problem with a contract that was closed out or if an outstanding claim is received.

As detailed herein, CCOs operate in a high-operations tempo environment while deployed to NTC, performing a role that is mission critical. Besides coordinating funding, ensuring timely delivery of products or services, complying with regulations, resolving claims and supporting/promoting small business goals, CCOs serve as unit liaisons between the rotational unit and the NTC AC.

The NTC AC's role is also critical because it is responsible for training and supporting the CCOs. Many CCOs who deploy to NTC are new to the Army acquisition workforce and this is often their first contracting job and deployment. The support and training that CCOs can expect to receive from the NTC AC includes:

- A 2-person office fully furnished with the necessary automation hardware and software to do their jobs, including e-mail, SPS and Internet capabilities, telephone and fax access.

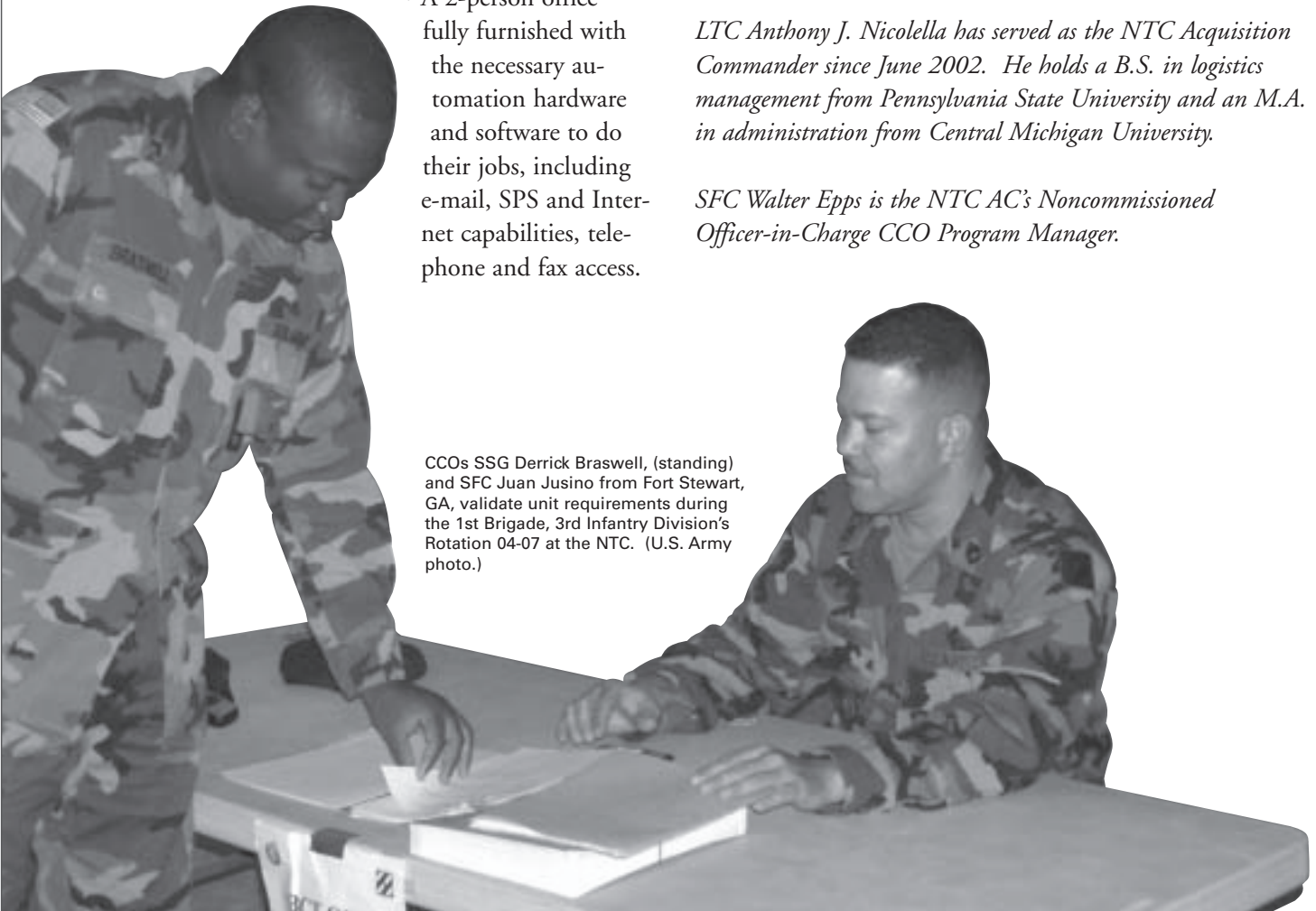
- Contracting officer support. Because many CCOs who deploy to NTC are new to contracting and are not warranted contracting officers (KOs), NTC AC KOs will review and sign all contract actions. In addition to KO support, CCOs can rely on the various functional experts (legal, property, quality and automation) within the NTC AC.
- The NTC AC provides a variety of contracting training for CCOs. The training is tailored to the needs of the individual CCO, officer and noncommissioned officer and covers numerous topics — from how to write a solicitation, to how to process a claim, to how to close out a contract. CCOs can also participate in the command's in-house training sessions.

This article provides a good sense of what CCOs can expect when they deploy to the NTC. Likewise, it provides better insight of the important role that CCOs play in supporting their warfighters. CCOs, when properly trained and supported, are combat multipliers and tremendous assets to the units they support. The acquisition workforce at the NTC AC takes great pride and satisfaction in supporting and training the U.S. Army's CCOs.

LTC Anthony J. Nicolella has served as the NTC Acquisition Commander since June 2002. He holds a B.S. in logistics management from Pennsylvania State University and an M.A. in administration from Central Michigan University.

SFC Walter Epps is the NTC AC's Noncommissioned Officer-in-Charge CCO Program Manager.

CCOs SSG Derrick Braswell, (standing) and SFC Juan Jusino from Fort Stewart, GA, validate unit requirements during the 1st Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division's Rotation 04-07 at the NTC. (U.S. Army photo.)



News From the Field

U.S. Army Tank-automotive and Armaments Command (TACOM) Leads Effort in Equipping New Iraqi Armed Forces with Battalion Sets. TACOM and the Tank-Automotive Research, Engineering and Development Center (TARDEC), with support from the Communications-Electronics Command (CECOM) and the Natick Soldier Support Center (NSSC), in an unprecedented teaming effort equipped 27 new Iraqi Armed Forces (IAF) battalions with 43 different types of equipment in record time.

The procured equipment ranged from vehicles and rolling stock to weapons, communications, night vision devices, fire control and individual soldier equipment. From early March 2004 — when TACOM received the directive from Army Materiel Command (AMC) headquarters to lead this contracting mission — to late May, a core group of 17 associates from TACOM, TARDEC, CECOM and NSSC, with ad hoc support from approximately 17 additional associates, worked 7 days a week to fully define the requirements

specified by the Coalition Provisional Authority's Coalition Military Assistance Training Team, devise an acquisition strategy, release a competitive solicitation, conduct a formal source selection evaluation and award a fixed-price indefinite delivery/indefinite quantity contract. This contract type allows maximum flexibility in supporting the IAF's changing needs as it becomes a significant factor in creating the new Iraqi security forces.

Acquisitions as complex as this one usually take 120-180 days to complete. TACOM completed this contract in just 79 days — 7 days ahead of an already aggressive schedule that was accelerated to meet the equipment and training requirements to stand up the IAF in time to support the transition of authority to the new Iraqi government on June 28, 2004. Ten proposals were received from firms throughout the world on April 29, 2004, and an award was made on May 25, 2004, to ANHAM Joint Venture of Vienna, VA, for \$259 million maximum.

Corps of Engineers Joins Cooperative Ecosystems Studies Unit. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Consolidated Contracting Office (VCCO), Vicksburg, MS, recently joined the Upper Middle Mississippi Valley Cooperative



IAF Battalion Sets Team Members — **Back Row:** (left to right) Steven Herbert (TARDEC), Marty Green (TACOM), Brian Corrigan (TACOM), John Klecha (TACOM), MG N. Ross Thompson III (Commanding General, TACOM), Harry Hallock (TACOM), Bill Roche (TACOM), Jake Brown (TARDEC), John Szafranski (TARDEC) and Mohan Khabra (TARDEC). **Middle Row:** Sue Lewandowski (TACOM), Peter Blazejczyk (PEO Combat Support and Combat Service Support), Chang Ford (Defense Contract Audit Agency), Jeff Parsons (HQ AMC), Celeste Steele (HQ AMC), Denise Mika (TACOM), Rich Franke (TARDEC), Elaine Hartung (TACOM) and Ken Starr (TACOM). **Front Row:** Kathy Krajnovic (TACOM), Janis Thelen (TACOM), Zoya Shaikh (TARDEC), Tina Minauro (TARDEC), Phoung Tran (TARDEC) and Sharon Criner (TACOM). (U.S. Army photo.)

Ecosystems Studies Unit (UMMV CESU) on behalf of DOD. The VCCO joined the UMMV CESU at the request of researchers in the Engineer Research and Development Center (ERDC). This was a precedent-setting effort that opened the door to USACE military funded programs for the entire CESU program.

The UMMV CESU has broad applicability within ERDC and allows DOD to quickly negotiate and award cooperative agreements to any UMMV CESU university partners. These agreements include conducting research for or providing technical assistance with the biological, physical, social and cultural sciences needed to address resource issues and interdisciplinary problem solving in an ecosystem context at the local, regional and national levels.

The CESU award process fulfills the competition requirements of *10 U.S.C. 2361* for agreements with institutions of higher education. In addition, CESU partners have agreed to low overhead rates, to enable ERDC researchers to employ the assistance of CESU partners at an affordable price. Any DOD office interested in using the UMMV CESU should contact Research Coordinator Alan Anderson at (217) 352-6511, ext. 6390 or **Alan.B.Anderson@erdc.usace.army.mil**; or Contract Specialist Joyce Roberts at (217) 352-6511, ext. 7568 or **Joyce.I.Roberts@erdc.usace.army.mil**.

CECOM Executes Modification to Other Transaction Agreement (OTA). On April 4, 2004, the CECOM Acquisition Center modified its OTA with Harsh Environment Applied Technologies (HEAT) Inc., a woman-owned small business. The \$1 million modification was issued to implement Phase II of the Head Tracked Sensor Suite (HTS2) effort. The HTS2 is an ongoing Science and Technology (S&T) Objective Program led by the CECOM Night Vision and Electronic Sensor Directorate located at Fort Belvoir, VA.

Under the HTS2 agreement's terms, HEAT will develop, test and demonstrate hardened helmet tracking sensors and situational awareness software. OTAs provide maximum flexibility by allowing HEAT to pursue new technologies and leading-edge S&T to develop specific capabilities that are critical to the HTS2 Program.

Significantly, several technologies developed under this OTA are applicable in other areas as well and show promise for overall Future Combat Systems Program goals. OTAs help broaden DOD's technology and industrial bases by fostering noncontractual business arrangements between DOD and

educational and commercial entities, many of which do not traditionally do business with the government. OTAs have been instrumental in furthering research that has demonstrated wider applications — both within and outside the military.

SMDC Organization Supports DOD's Chemical and Biological Defense Mission. The Space and Missile Defense Command (SMDC) has a small cadre of five contract specialists resident in the Chemical Biological Medical Systems (CBMS) Joint Project Management Office that provide contract support to the CBMS staff and its subordinate Product Managers: the Joint Vaccine Acquisition Program and the Medical Identification and Treatment Systems.

The contracting efforts have proven to be highly specialized, necessitating a working knowledge of life sciences as well as Food and Drug Administration requirements. The contract specialists in this branch are integrated product team members who perform technical and product management activities. The contract specialists are knowledgeable enough to understand the technical terminology and technology requirements requested by the scientists. In most cases, if a government specialist is not available, the contract specialist is equipped to detect a falsehood without additional assistance.

AFSC Contracting Personnel Successfully Accelerate 40mm Awards. In April 2004, the Program Manager for Maneuvering Armament Systems asked the Army Field Support Command (AFSC) to shift the FY04 40mm awards from August-September 2004 to June 2004. The contracting team dealt with numerous issues ranging from competitive solicitations for commercial items to plant-procuring other components, including the Load, Assemble and Pack requirements, which necessitated the acceleration of FY04 rate negotiations. Because the team successfully accelerated the award dates, additional reprogrammed monies became available and were put on contract in early July.

The team awarded nearly \$150 million to support the accelerated effort during June and July. The AFSC 40mm contracting team Procuring Contracting Officers are Gene Harrison, Melanie Johnson and Susan Phares. The Contract Specialists are Sherry Burris, Sandra DeGryse, Larry Leahy, Donna Ponce, Christine Thompson and Joe West.

ACA-SR Provides Support to Rapid Equipping Force (REF). MAJ Cyprien LaPorte, Army Contracting Agency – Southern Region (ACA-SR), served as the senior contracts advisor to REF from March 29, 2004, through Sept. 23, 2004. REF, headquartered at Fort Belvoir, VA, is a G-3 operation reporting directly to the Army Vice Chief of Staff. The REF's primary mission is to equip commanders with commercial-off-the-shelf solutions that increase mission capability and reduce risks for warfighters.

During his deployment, LaPorte advised REF leaders on business matters and forecasted future REF contracting needs, including developing support for upcoming requirements. He worked closely with REF program managers and provided invaluable assistance in developing statements of work, acquisition plans and other supporting documentation. He also educated REF personnel on acquisition regulations and federal procurement law.

The ACA-SR will continue to support REF with two additional people from September 2004 through March 2005. The White Sands Missile Range Directorate of Contracting (an ACA-SR organization) is also providing REF contracting support.

AMCOM Acquisition Center University. The Aviation and Missile Command's (AMCOM's) Acquisition Center University (ACU) was established in April 1999 by AMCOM Acquisition Center Executive Director L. Marlene Cruze as a formal job-site education center focused on practical application of acquisition processes. A "hands-on" training program that provides quality and timely acquisition workplace-relevant education, ACU uses current AMCOM acquisition practitioners and external subject matter expertise to deliver material in a "real-world" context. To date, approximately 7,300 students have attended more than 165 classes with about 22,900 Continuous Learning Points Awarded.

FY04 Intern and Training Coordinator Workshop

Kimberley D. Buehler and Jessica J. Hardage

The U.S. Army Acquisition Support Center (ASC) Contracting Career Program Office (CP-14) hosted an Intern and Training Coordinator Workshop in Nashville, TN,



DA interns in the IWG. **Front Row:** Julie Griffey, Angela Trimmier, Terri Harrison, Karin Weinert and Sherri Brown. **Second Row:** Christy Herbig, Dan Endrizzi, Brian Vershoore, Justin Filler, Jessica Hardage, Stacy Potts, Dee Klaf and Rachel Phelps.

June 2-4, 2004. The workshop targeted current CP-14 intern and training coordinators to increase Armywide communication and information sharing, validate and improve existing CP-14 programs and establish a series of tasks to execute FY05 intern hiring and training programs.

Twenty-three CP-14 intern and training coordinators, from the Army Materiel Command major subordinate commands, Army Corps of Engineers, Army Medical Command, Space and Missile Defense Command (SMDC), Army Contracting Agency and ASC Regional Customer Support Offices, participated in 2 1/2 days of lectures and roundtable discussions. Personnel from the Civilian Human Resources Agency (CHRA); North Central Civilian Personnel Operations Center; Acquisition, Logistics and Technology Enterprise Systems and Services; Army Logistics Management College; ASC; and True Careers — a commercial job services company — spoke at the event. Discussions covered intern and training issues and initiatives such as recruitment and hiring procedures; entry-level, journeyman and executive training; professional development; and CP-14- and CHRA-sponsored electronic initiatives. The diverse speakers and attendees openly exchanged ideas and subject matter expertise.

Program coordinators nominated current DA interns to attend the workshop and participate in working sessions conducted concurrently with the intern and training coordinator sessions. An Intern Working Group (IWG), comprising 13 DA interns from Army contracting organizations reviewed 5 key areas of the CP-14 intern program: recruitment, marketing, program Web sites, training handbooks and an FY05 intern workshop.

The IWG provided recommendations and products integrating marketing strategy with recruitment practices. They proposed new program terminology to align with current commercial practices, created sample promotional brochures, suggested increased exposure at college career days and job fairs and on Internet-based employment Web sites. The interns created two new handbooks. The "Welcome Handbook" explains the intern program and processes prior to program entry. The second handbook provides practical guidance and serves as a reference throughout the intern experience.

Additionally, the IWG drafted a proposal for an FY05 Intern Professional Workshop that included a full agenda with suggested DOD and Army speakers and topics, a proposed timeframe and location and anticipated costs. CP-14 is reviewing all intern recommendations and products.

The workshop provided a forum for the improvement and implementation of CP-14 programs and policy.

Kimberly D. Buehler, ASC CP-14 Accession Programs Manager, Fort Belvoir, VA, and Jessica J. Hardage, DA Intern, SMDC, Huntsville, AL, submitted this article.

The DAR Council Corner

There are many *Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR)* and *Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement (DFARS)* final rules published throughout the year; two are summarized here.

DFARS Part 242 – Contract Administration and Audit Services Section 242.1104 – Production Surveillance and Reporting. Effective June 8, 2004, this rule amends *DFARS* to eliminate requirements for contract administration offices to perform production surveillance on contractors that have only Criticality Designator C (low-urgency) contracts and for monitoring progress on any Criticality Designator C contract, unless production surveillance or contract monitoring is specifically requested by the contracting officer. This change allows contract administration offices to focus production surveillance resources on critical and high-risk contracts.

DFARS Part 206 – Competition Requirements Subpart 206.001 – Follow-on Production Contracts to Prototype Projects. This final rule, effective June 8, 2004, provides an exception from competition requirements to apply

to contracts awarded under the authority of *National Defense Authorization Act for FY02 (Public Law 107-107)*, Section 822. Section 822 permits award of a follow-on production contract without competition to participants in an Other Transaction Agreement (OTA) for a prototype project if:

- The OTA provides for a follow-on production contract.
- The OTA provides for at least one-third non-federal cost share for the prototype project.
- Parties participating in the OTA were competitively selected.
- Participants successfully completed the prototype project.
- The follow-on production contract does not call for more units than are specified in the OTA.
- The prices established in the follow-on production contract do not exceed the target prices specified in the OTA.

This information was provided by DAR Council Army Policy Member Barbara Binney. For more information, contact her at (703) 604-7113.

CECOM Contracting Successes

The U.S. Army Communications-Electronics Command (CECOM) Iraq Reconstruction Acquisition Team and the CECOM Acquisition Center were both recently honored for their accomplishments in the past year.

During a ceremony held at the Pentagon Aug. 14, 2004, Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz recognized the Iraq Reconstruction Acquisition Team for its contributions to ongoing efforts in Iraq. CECOM was tasked with devising a suitable acquisition strategy that would satisfy requirements to reconstruct seven critical Iraqi infrastructure sectors including water, oil, security, justice, transportation, communication, building, housing and electricity.

CECOM Contracting Officer Jack Kulaga led the communications sector acquisition team. Other team members included Contract Specialist Sharon Fernandes and Source Selection Evaluation Board Subfactor Chief Robert Piermattei. Deputy to the Commanding General Victor Ferlise and CECOM Acquisition Center Director Edward G. Elgart were also recognized for their roles during the source selection.

At a ceremony held at Fort Belvoir, VA, CECOM Acquisition Center Contracting Officer Deborah Gilligan and

Contract Specialist Joseph Manganaro were recognized for their extraordinary efforts in supplying Second Generation Forward-Looking Infrareads to warfighters. COL Michael Bowman, Program Manager, Night Vision/Reconnaissance, Surveillance and Target Acquisition, presented Gilligan with the Army Superior Civilian Service Award and Manganaro with the Army Achievement Medal for Civilian Service.

Bowman cited the high caliber of acquisition support the CECOM Acquisition Center provided to his office and its customers.

For more information about the CECOM Acquisition Center, contact Robert F. Tiedeman, Procurement Analyst, at (732) 532-3818 or DSN 992-3818.

New Southwest Asia Command Blends Installation Support With Contingency Contracting

MAJ Douglas A. Schuetz

The U.S. Army Contracting Command Southwest Asia-Qatar (USACC SWA QA) is one of two new battalion-level commands operating under the auspices of the U.S. Army Contracting Command Southwest Asia.

Formally activated Dec. 13, 2003, the battalion has a twofold mission. What makes it unique is that it fulfills its original mission as the Directorate of Contracting for Camp As Sayliyah, Qatar, and has regional oversight and responsibility for four contingency contracting offices in Afghanistan and Uzbekistan.

The battalion performs a full range of acquisition and contracting support, and has eight Department of the Army civilians and four military staff members. From administering two multimillion-dollar-cost-plus-award-fee contracts for base operations and base security to functioning as the International Merchants Purchase Authorization Card (IMPAC) program coordinator for *Joint Task Force (JTF)-180*, the Afghanistan effort in the global war on terrorism (GWOT), this multi-functional command does it all.

The organization has always played a major role on Camp As Sayliyah. As the camp transitioned from a simple, preposition site for war reserve equipment with only 50 staff

members, to the current major command and control headquarters with more than 3,500 military members, the contracting office was instrumental in managing an increase of more than \$11 million to the base operations and base security contracts. Those contracts were critical in ensuring the new missions of the installation and its major tenant organizations — the U.S. Central Command, Special Operations Command-Central and Iraqi Survey Group — were able to continue uninterrupted and focused on fighting the GWOT. The command's base operations branch administers the two complex multimillion-dollar cost-plus-award-fee contracts with more than 480 contractors providing base operations support and 245 contracted guards providing base security.

The command's other branch, Base Support branch, is responsible for all local procurements in excess of \$2,500 for more than 14 tenant units. The branch conducts more than 90 percent of the procurements with local Qatari vendors and purchases everything from office supplies, bottled water, laundry and cell phones to medical, dental and optical services and maintenance for vehicles, heavy equipment and electric utility and water service. Additionally, the command has a robust construction program and has awarded and administered more than \$5 million in FY03 contracts and is on track to exceed that in FY04. Overall, in FY03, the command awarded more than \$72 million and through June 2004, it has awarded more than \$40 million.

The command's new mission is contractual oversight and responsibility for all contract actions for *JTF-180*. With four separate contracting offices in Kabul, Bagram and Kandahar, Afghanistan and Karshi-Khanabad, Uzbekistan, the



Visit to Pol-e Charkh-e site (Kabul), home to Afghan National Army 1st and 3rd Brigades, Camp Blackhorse. Inspecting construction projects awarded by Kabul Contracting Office. (U.S. Army photo by MAJ Douglas A. Schuetz.)

command supports more than 14,000 soldiers with an annual contract execution of approximately \$350 million.

The command functions as the regional commander, providing Title X contingency contracting oversight for *JTF-180*. It provides backup support for large, complex or high-dollar procurements because the commander is vested with an unlimited dollar value warrant. The command has already awarded five contracts worth more than \$18 million since December 2003. Those contracts cover everything from military working dogs, commercial power generation, shower and toilet facilities, ballistic protection for helicopters and airfield construction. The command has made determined efforts to expand regional sources to reduce costs and reduce acquisition lead and delivery times to get much-needed supplies and equipment into the hands of military members more quickly.

This new command is at the forefront of providing warfighter support. Whether it is operating the Camp As Sayliyah base or providing contract support to soldiers in Afghanistan, USACC SWA QA is playing a major role in combating terrorism.

MAJ Douglas A. Schuetz is the Defense Cooperation in Armaments Officer, U.S. Embassy, Oslo, Norway. At the time the article was written, he was the Executive Officer and Deputy Director of Contracting, USACC SWA QA.

Army AL&T Magazine 2004 Readership Survey Results

The *Army AL&T* Magazine editorial staff would like to extend its appreciation to all those who responded to our 2004 Readership Survey in the May-June issue. Our driving goal is to provide Army Acquisition Corps professionals — and the Army at large — with salient educational articles, news and career information in the acquisition, logistics and technology (AL&T) arena. This survey will help us accomplish that goal by telling us where we're hitting the mark, where we need to make changes and where we might want to expand our editorial horizons.

By and large, the results from this survey were very positive with 77 percent of respondents indicating they read "All" or

"Most" of each issue. An impressive 89 percent indicated that the magazine was either "Very Useful" (54 percent) or "Sometimes Useful" (35 percent) in keeping readers informed about matters related to the acquisition, logistics, contracting and technology career fields. Eighty-two percent rated article quality as either "Excellent" (48 percent) or "Good" (34 percent).

One reason for these impressive ratings is the magazine's new layout and design. Another is the quality of the articles submitted by so many talented authors who are subject matter experts in their respective fields. On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 indicating best, between 77 percent and 83 percent of respondents marked 1 or 2, respectively, for "General Appearance," "Page Layout," "Charts and Graphs," "Photos/Captions," "Addition of Color Pages" and "Addition of New Sections."

On the topic of layout and design, though, the survey elicited a handful of questions concerning the magazine's expense. "The use of such high quality paper and printing is too extravagant for just informing the workforce on projects and programs. In comparing the overall look and feel to *Newsweek* or *Time* magazine, this publication is extravagant in its appearance and hard to justify from a cost standpoint." This reader's sentiment was echoed about a dozen times, and clearly warrants response.

The Secretary of the Army has made it clear that he is concerned with the benefits and the costs of all Army publications. Because of improvements in the way we publish *AL&T* — a more professional editorial process, leveraged relationships with printing contractors and use of state-of-the-art desktop publishing and printing technologies — we are able to produce the magazine on better paper with color photographs and graphics, for a larger subscriber population, on the same budget that we had a year ago. In short, while the magazine looks better, and is an easier read for most of the workforce, it costs about the same to produce. The only actual cost that has gone up is postage to mail the magazine because we are producing much larger, information-packed issues.

Without diminishing the value of our new eye-catching layout and design, we feel the primary driver behind the reader survey ratings is improvement in *AL&T* content. The addition of new features and columns further added to the magazine's overall appeal. A majority of readers found real value in our cover stories, lead articles, news briefs and the ever-popular Army Acquisition Executive and Acquisition